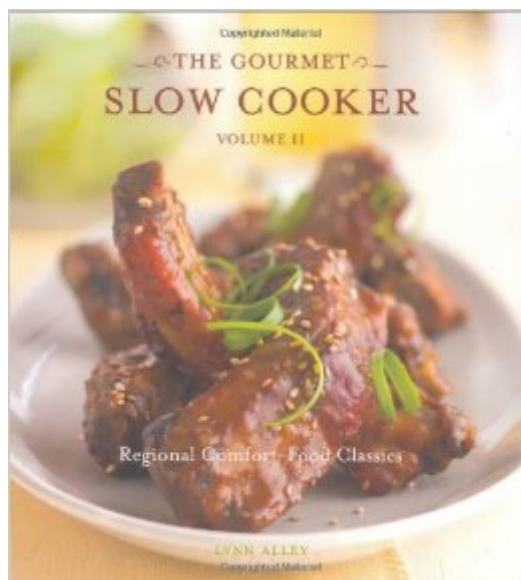


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The Gourmet Slow Cooker: Volume II, Regional Comfort-Food Classics



Synopsis

With its emphasis on quality ingredients, nuanced global flavors, and sumptuous presentation, the original GOURMET SLOW COOKER inspired discerning home cooks to dust off-and fall in love with-their slow cookers again. Back by popular demand, Lynn Alley serves a generous second helping of sophisticated yet easy-to-prepare slow-cooker recipes, this time with a focus on regional comfort food. Packed with classic and innovative dishes designed to delight family and guests alike, THE GOURMET SLOW COOKER: VOLUME II will satisfy fans' hunger for new recipes-and encourage even more busy home cooks to join the bandwagon.ReviewsRecommended for "the cook who wants ease, but with more flavor than the bland crock-pot cuisine your mother made."-Portland Oregonian

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Customer Reviews

I have this book and the author's other slow-cooker cookbook, and they are wonderful! The recipes are easy to follow, smell incredible while cooking and taste delicious. This is NOT an "open-the-can and dump it in your crock pot" type cookbook. The recipes call for fresh ingredients. Sometimes the author suggests you brown meats before placing them in the cooker, but as she states in her introduction this step is not required. It's a recommendation.My favorite recipes from this book are the pulled pork and chicken adobo. Many recipes from the book are now a part of my repertoire of regularly cooked meals.I've learned a lot from this book regarding making "gourmet" slow-cooker meals and am so glad I own this book and the author's other book. Another bonus is it has some

excellent pictures throughout. For the price, you definitely can't go wrong with this book. If you love food that tastes delicious and you own a slow cooker, you will be happy to have this book as a part of your collection of recipes.

I like this cookbook better than Alley's first slow cooker book. Because it's regional foods, the recipes are still varied, but the ingredients are a little less exotic. This book contains close to 60 solid recipes with beautiful photography. Best of all, the author admits she tested the recipes on various brands of slow cookers, something that didn't quite happen with the first book. The intro pages contain useful info. I was persuaded to whip out a thermometer and test my cooker's low and keep warm settings. I've found that my model runs extremely hot and I'm sending it in for warranty evaluation.

I thought this cookbook was going to be a winner. Upon its arrival, I quickly scanned the book and found many fabulous looking photos and really promising new ways to use my slow cooker. I chose 3 recipes to start, Santa Fe Sweet Potato Soup; Salmon, Mushroom, Sorrel and Aromatic Rice Bisque; Pork Roast with Apples, Cider and Cream. Only the Sweet Potato Soup is promising with a some tinkering to add flavor. The other two were tasteless. Not wanting to give up on the great sounding stuff in this book, I gave the Black Bean Chicken Chili and Apricot, Ginger Upside Down Cake. OMG, again, the chili with all the flavorful ingredients was bland. I should have used canned beans and skipped the time in the slow cooker. As for the cake, the recipe says to cook for 2.5 hours on high. Granted my slow cooker might not cook as hot as the recipe tested machine, but 5 hours later, that cake was finally cooked through in the center. The ginger flavor was not to be found. For all the flavorful ingredients in each recipe I tried, you'd think there would be a lot of layers of flavor going on in the final products. Not so. Everything I've tried was really bland. I'll try a couple more recipes before I completely give up on this book.

I purchased this book because I LOVE Alley's first volume of recipes for the slow cooker. I am very happy with this book, however it is really very different than the first (which makes them a great set). While flavor is certainly not compromised, the foods in this cookbook are more like peasant-food than gourmet dishes. With a hungry husband and 3 growing boys in my house, comfort foods are always well-received here, and I've had no complaints from them! The ingredients in this volume are easier to manage (no grinding of spices as in the first volume). My only disappointment with the book is that it seems many of the recipes, while tasty, don't seem to benefit

much from the slow-cooking...some of the soups, for example, are just about as easily made on the stovetop. For my family, the slow cooker has primarily been a great way to prepare flavorful and tender meats, and this cookbook has offered us some new options (Korean style ribs, chicken adobo, Italian style pork chops, for example). I have made some of the non-meat recipes (i.e. several soups/chowders), and I find that they are just as easy to make on the stove. This is my one bit of advice to the new owner of a slow-cooker: Don't try to make it something it isn't...fix recipes which lend themselves well to the type of cooking, and fix your veggies on the stovetop or in the oven.

Those are Alley's wonderful Korean-Style Ribs on the cover. So easy and so good. This week I'm trying her Bratwurst/Red Cabbage/Apples and her Yankee Pot Pie. Alley's techniques are simple, but for the best flavor, most do require around 30 minutes prep time. Believe me, I've found it worth it. If I had just one slow cooker book, it would be one of hers.

Using the recipes in this book has inspired me to get back into cooking. We especially love the Posole recipe, which updates a traditional recipe with new touches. The New England Brown Bread recipe is so good that it beats my grandmother's Down East Yankee recipe... and that's saying a lot! My enthusiasm for cooking in general has been invigorated by the creative and fresh approach in the recipes in this book.

I use my slow cooker frequently; it gets me very good food with little effort when I work fairly long hours. I owned Lynn Alley's first book and thought I would like Volume II. So far I've made one recipe, the Adobo Chicken, which met with favor from my husband--distinctive flavors and easy to do; vinegar, soy sauce, ginger, brown sugar, and chicken basically. Oh and of course garlic! I like the other recipes and intend to try them in the near future; particularly a slow-cooked pork roast for barbecued pork sandwiches. And a green chile/hominy posole' style soup. There's even a fruit preserve recipe that sounds interesting. The format of the books is clear, the recipes are easy to follow, the book's design and photographs are attractive, and there's enough variety to keep it interesting. And nary a can of cream of mushroom soup!

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